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psychologists and the clinical approach of the psychiatrists and the Child Guidance personnel are beginning to converge in the study of child behavior and development.

Future Prospects—A general orientation

It is no accident that these interesting developments in family research reflect the interpenetration of various disciplines. An increasing number of studies will require the collaboration of a number of specialists.

To such a collaboration sociologists have an important contribution to make. The anthropologists, with their understandable interest in how the family of one culture differs from that of another, have studied the cultural framework of the family rather than the total interaction and social process within the family. The psychoanalytical discussions often lack adequate recognition of cultural factors and social structure. This, despite noteworthy attempts of a number of psychoanalysts to set forth their findings within a framework of cultural relativity.

The sociologists, on the other hand, have a great tradition of Cooley, Mead, Park, Burgess, Waller. The conception of social interaction provides, it seems to me, a good general framework for the integration of the special approaches, these dealing with what have been termed genic, psychogenic, sociogenic factors.

Sociologists have also a methodological contribution to make. We have studied more carefully than either the psychiatrists or the anthropologists the frequency distributions of given family attitudes and behavior at least in our own society. We have also gone further in the quests for causes in ascertaining general sequences and associations of factors especially in the field of marriage adjustment. Finally, if we have not yet solved, we have at least faced more seriously the problem of integration of the case study and the quantitative approaches.

COMMUNITY RESEARCH: DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENT CONDITION*

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PRESIDENT WIRTH requested this group to review research on the "community," as exemplified in rural and urban sociology and in ecology; and suggested it consider the material in the light of: 1. background; 2. division of labor, and 3. theoretical problems. He asked me to write a summary report, and the other men to evaluate, discuss, and supplement it from the viewpoint of their special fields. The assignment is too large and diffuse to be covered in a detailed manner in the time allotted. This paper, therefore, will establish a few bench marks, set a frame of reference, and sketch in a few salient details.[1] I hope the others will develop a fourth point, namely, the contributions they believe men working in their special areas have made to sociological knowledge in this field.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

American sociologists, in the last half century, have devoted increasing attention to the empirical study of socio-cultural phenomena in localized areas, variously referred to as neighborhoods, towns, cities, communities, regions. No matter what the unit, it was assumed to be an organized structural and functional entity with spatial, temporal, and sociological dimensions. The development of research within this general framework may be divided into three main periods. The first lasted from about 1895 to 1915, the second from 1915 to 1930, and the third from 1930 to the present.

The first period was marked by an emergent interest in the city as "the natural laboratory of social science."[2] The character

* Paper read before the annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, New York City, December 28-30, 1947.

[1] A systematic effort was made in 1932 to make an inventory of each of the several fields of sociology and to summarize the methods each used to achieve its results. See L. L. Bernard, (editor) *The Fields and Methods of Sociology,* New York, 1934, pp. 52-109, and 286-345, for the papers pertinent to this discussion.

[2] Quoted from an announcement issued by Columbia University in 1894, when Franklin H.

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of this interest was essentially *normative*.[3] Consequently, students approached their problems with a set of implicit assumptions as a guide to what they thought community life ought to be; they compared what they saw in the living community with an ideal construct and found that the concrete realities were not congruous with their cherished abstractions. Therefore, since the ideal was assumed to be the normal, the real must be abnormal. Value judgments were implicit in this frame of reference, one of which was the assumption that the role of the investigator was to "expose" the situation he investigated and to "improve" it; that is, to make the real like the ideal community.

In consequence, these normative investigators limited their interests in the real community to its "problem" aspects—poverty, cruelty, alcoholism, crime, prostitution, economic exploitation, and maladjusted immigrants. In the city, their attention was focussed on the area that epitomized these things, the slum; in the country, what they believed to be the decay or malfunctioning of institutions—the church and the family in particular—the migration of young people toward the city, and the disintegration of neighborhoods caught their attention.

This *normative-meliorative* approach dominated the study of community life from roughly 1890 to 1915; it is perhaps best exemplified by the social survey movement.[4] Although it eventuated in the separation of social work from sociology, the seeds of reform matured more rapidly than those which grew into what I have called analysis, and the roots of this lusty growth are still firmly embedded in soil the sociologist claims as his own. They are evident in the emphasis sociologists have placed on the study of crime and so-called disorganization and social pathology. Thus, the *normative* approach has left an abiding brand upon sociology in general, and upon community research in particular.

The *normative-meliorative* emphasis gradually gave way to the *analytical* when a few sociologists became interested in looking at particular communities in terms of their history, development, population, and organization in order to determine their extent and nature. The earliest studies with an *analytical* orientation were made by graduate students at the University of Chicago, starting in 1900, but these early studies were strongly influenced by the ideas, attitudes, and goals of the reformers. Nevertheless, they marked a turn in the road in the sociologist's efforts to study objectively the communal collectivity in terms of its relation to the larger society.

Charles J. Bushnell's comparison of the "Stock Yard" and "Hyde Park Communities," with special emphasis on the "Stock Yard Community,"[5] and John M. Gillette's work on the Calumet area in South Chicago[6] during 1900 and 1901 were the earliest published detailed studies which were indicative of a trend toward *analysis* rather than reform. Bushnell's study is notewothy for its use of base maps, tables, and graphs to depict his findings. In passing, it should be noted that he utilized the technique of circles[7] on maps to show the concentration of charity in certain areas.[8] Map No. 7[9] showed that the distribution of Families in Economic Distress, Contributors to the Bureau of Associated Charities, and Average Family Incomes in 1900 formed a gradient

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Giddings was appointed to the newly created chair of sociology. See F. L. Tolman, "The Study of Sociology in the Institutions of Learning in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, 7: 1902, 797-838.

[3] *Ibid.*, see especially, 806.

[4] See Shelby M. Harrison, *The Social Survey, The Idea Defined and its Development Traced*, New York, 1931; also, Manuel C. Elmer, *Technique of Social Surveys*, 3rd edition, Los Angeles, 1927.

[5] Charles J. Bushnell, "Some Social Aspects of the Chicago Stock Yards," *American Journal of Sociology*, VII: part I, 145-170; II, 289-330; III, 433-474; IV, 687-702; 1901-1902.

[6] John M. Gillette, "The Culture Agencies of a Typical Manufacturing Group: South Chicago," *American Journal of Sociology*, VII: part I, 91-121; II, 188-215; 1901-1902.

[7] Map, *op. cit.*, 308.

[8] *Ibid.*, 308, for a statement of the relation between family charity and "distress" areas.

[9] *Ibid.*, opposite, 308.

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pattern westward from Lake Michigan between 39th and 55th Streets to Western Avenue. He demonstrated that his variables were related to the different areas he mapped in the same way the ecologists did in the 1920's.[10]

The earliest sociological studies of rural communities were made by graduate students at Columbia University, under Giddings' stimulation and direction. Giddings viewed the community as a field laboratory to which the sociologist must turn for inductive study if he was to develop a "Science of Society."[11] This influence is apparent in the way his students—James M. Williams, *An American Town* (1906); Warren H. Wilson, *Quaker Hill* (1907); and Newell L. Sims, *A Hoosier Village* (1912)—approached and analysed their data. Each of these authors traced the development of the community studied from its founding to the then present. Briefly, they conceived of the community as a social form integrated around interrelated institutional services, located mainly in a nucleated village which catered to both farmers and village dwellers. These men emphasized the disorganizing effects of communications on the small community, and showed how people and institutions made successive adjustments to the expanding urban world.[12] These studies, although analytical in their orientation, had little immediate influence on sociology outside of reinforcing the conviction of social actionists that American farm, village, town, and city life was changing rapidly and—in their judgment—for the worse.

The second era in the development of community research dates from the publication, in 1915, of Charles J. Galpin's *Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community,*[13] and Robert E. Park's "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment."[14] Galpin, as is well known, carefully described functional patterns of community relationships within a limited farm-village area of interaction. He demonstrated that each village center in Walworth County, Wisconsin, had a tributary area which it served with specific functions; and that each function—banking, newspapers, trade, high schools, churches, libraries—had a characteristic pattern of its own. He also showed that services performed by the community's institutions were the same for village and farm dwellers, and that both groups were interested equally in the maintenance of community services and activities. In short, town and country people were tied together by functions, interests, and sentiments in a structure that could be mapped, measured quantitatively, and studied objectively. He later called this collectivity the "rurban community."

Galpin's *Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community* stimulated a line of research among sociologists and economists, in land-grant colleges and agricultural experiment stations, which became exceedingly popular after 1920. These studies were characterized generally by the assemblage of masses of detailed facts, usually statistical in nature, on some particular phase or problem of rural life, usually without explicit theoretical orientation or clear-cut conclusions.[15] An indirect but profound effect of Galpin's study was the way it influenced Park's thinking about the structure of the city. Park remarked to the writer, on several occasions in the late 1930's, that Galpin's *Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community* brought into focus his own thoughts about the relationships between city growth

[10] Bushnell's Stock Yards Community is regarded currently as a local community and a problem area. See Saul D. Alinsky, "Community Analysis and Organization," *American Journal of Sociology,* 46: 787-808; May, 1941.

[11] Tolman, *op. cit.,* 807-808.

[12] For a more adequate summary of these studies see Carl C. Taylor, "Techniques of Community Study and Analyses as Applied to Modern Civilized Societies," in Ralph Linton, (editor) *The Science of Man in the World Crisis,* New York, 1945, 419-424.

[13] *University of Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Research Bulletin No. 34,* Madison, Wisconsin, 1915.

[14] *American Journal of Sociology,* XX: 577-612, Mar. 1915.

[15] Carl C. Taylor, *op. cit.,* 427-431.

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and structure, institutional services, neighborhoods, and natural areas.

Park's suggestive paper on *The City* proved to be the point of departure for the many studies of city life undertaken at the University of Chicago immediately after World War I, which resulted in the recognition and development of human ecology as a new approach to the interpretation of the community in the middle 1920's.[16]

Empirical research on community life had become a major interest of sociologists by the middle of the third decade of the twentieth century. More than a score of studies of some aspects of rural community life were reported in 1926.[17] By this date, the studies of urban life at the University of Chicago, largely under Park's stimulation, had started to appear in printed form. *The City*[18] had come out in 1925, to be followed by *The Urban Community*[19] in 1926. Subsequent monographs appeared at irregular intervals during the next decade.[20]

American sociology of the 1920's was characterized by an assiduous accumulation of multitudinous facts about rural and urban life, the coinage of terms ("rurban"), the enunciation of concepts ("natural area"), the formulation of hypotheses (the Burgess zonal hypothesis of city growth), and the investigation of processes believed to underlie communal growth and structure (competition, invasion—succession, segregation). It should be emphasized that these terms and constructs were derived from sociologists' efforts to generalize about the things they saw in the welter of actual life in local areas. During those years students were so busy "discovering" and building that they did not take time to appraise what they had accomplished.[21] The rise of human ecology as a new approach to and interpretation of communal life was the most notable development of that period.

The publication of *Middletown*[22] in 1929, clearly marked the end of one era and the start of another in the development of community research. *Middletown* focussed attention upon a viewpoint that had been largely neglected by ecologists, as well as by urban and rural sociologists, namely, the interrelations between the daily life of people, their institutional organizations and function, and the social structure of the community. Its influence has become increasingly clear as more and more investigators have framed their work around its organizing concepts—social change, institutional organization and function, and social stratification.

DIVISION OF LABOR AND THEORETICAL PROBLEMS

Community studies published in the last 15 years may be divided into three categories on the basis of their central focus: *ecological*, *structural*, and *typological*. The years since *Middletown* have been marked by a definite decline in the research popularity of the ecological, and an increasing

[16] R. D. McKenzie, "The Field and Problems of Demography, Human Geography, and Human Ecology" in L. L. Bernard (editor) *op. cit.*, especially pp. 60-62. For an account of the background of Park's paper on the city see: Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie, *The City*, Chicago, 1925, VII-VIII; and Milla A. Alihan, *Social Ecology*, New York, 1938, 2-3.

[17] Charles J. Galpin, H. H. Kolb, Dwight Sanderson, and Carl C. Taylor, "Rural Sociology Research in the United States," *Social Science Research Monograph*, 1927.

[18] Park, Burgess, McKenzie, *op. cit.*

[19] Ernest W. Burgess (ed.) *The Urban Community*, Chicago, 1926.

[20] Nels Anderson, *The Hobo*, Chicago, 1923; Frederick M. Thrasher, *The Gang*, Chicago, 1927; Ruth S. Cavan, *Suicide*, Chicago 1927; Ernest R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, Chicago, 1927; Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto, Chicago*, 1928; Harvey W. Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, Chicago, 1929; Paul G. Cressey, *The Taxi Dance Hall*, Chicago, 1932; Albert Blumenthal, *Small Town Stuff*, Chicago, 1932; E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in Chicago*, Chicago, 1932; Walter C. Reckless, *Vice in Chicago*, Chicago, 1933; Bingham Dai, *Opium Addiction in Chicago*, Chicago, 1937; Andrew W. Lind, *An Island Community: Ecological Succession in Hawaii*, Chicago, 1938; and Robert E. L. Faris and H. Warren Dunham, *Mental Disorders in Urban Areas*, Chicago, 1939.

[21] This attitude is illustrated at length by the authors represented in L. L. Bernard, *op. cit.*, 52-109 and 286-345.

[22] Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown*, New York, 1929.

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interest in the structural and typological approaches. The structural, or stratification, approach is in the main a new development. It may be called the prevailing fashion of the third period, just as the investigation of the interrelations between the ecological structure of the community and the pathological aspects of communal life—slums, ghettos, hobohemias, delinquency areas, gangs, ethnic conflict, suicide, and divorce—were very popular in the 1920's.[23]

Human Ecology

Ecology has been in an ambivalent position for almost a decade. Alihan's criticism[24] fortuitously coincided rather closely with McKenzie's death and Park's retirement from active writing. Although little in the way of theory has been developed in the past decade, the idea persists that there is a legitimate place for human ecology in the social sciences.

As is well known, Alihan's critical analysis, on strictly philosophical grounds, of the thought structure within which empirical ecological studies were made, centered upon ecological theory as propounded by Park, Burgess, and McKenzie. These "classical" ecologists, mainly Park, assumed that the human community was organized around two basic processes, competition and communication, which gave rise to two orders in society—the biotic, rooted in competition, and the moral, rooted in communication.[25] With these assumptions as points of departure, Park asserted that the competitive order was the realm of the ecologist and the moral order that of the sociologist. Alihan perceived the dualistic dilemma in which these assumptions placed Park and other orthodox ecological theorists, and moved to the attack with devastating effect on ecological theory.

Davie before Alihan, and Hiller, Hatt, and Firey since, have subjected selected ecological hypotheses and concepts to specific test at the community level. In 1933, Davie began a systematic study of the physical structure of New Haven to determine the relevancy of Burgess' hypothesis of city growth. He found that it did not apply in this eastern seaboard city of approximately 160,000 people.[26] Hiller tested the gradient concept in the areas surrounding 53 small urban centers and found it held true; but the way in which each city influenced the area subordinate to it was dependent upon its size.[27] Hatt's application of the *natural area* concept to a section of Seattle indicated that this widely accepted construct did not stand the test of empirical scrutiny at the hands of a trained investigator.[28] Although Hatt did not recommend dropping the term from sociological literature, he was careful to point out that it should be used in the specific context of a research problem, and not as a *real* entity.[29] Firey has recently published a criticism and test of earlier ecological theories about urban growth in Boston.[30] Firey's position runs counter to orthodox views, and his idea of human ecology appears to differ from that of Hawley[31]—a point that may be dis-

[23] L. L. Bernard, *op. cit.*, and Carl C. Taylor, *op. cit.*

[24] Milla A. Alihan, *op. cit.*

[25] R. E. Park, "Human Ecology," *American Journal of Sociology,* XLII: 1-15, Jul. 1936; R. E. Park, "Reflections on Communication and Culture," *American Journal of Sociology,* XLIV: 187-205, Sep. 1938.

[26] Maurice R. Davie, "The Pattern of Urban Growth," *Studies in the Science of Society,* New Haven, 1937, 133-161.

[27] E. T. Hiller, "Extension of Urban Characteristics into Rural Areas," *Rural Sociology,* 6: 242-257, Sep. 1941.

[28] Paul Hatt, "The Concept of Natural Area," *American Sociological Review,* 11: 423-427, Aug. 1946.

[29] *Ibid.,* 427.

[30] Walter Firey, *Land Use in Central Boston,* Cambridge, Mass. 1947, especially 3-27, for a statement of pre-existing theory, and pp. 323-340 for Firey's own formulation of theory about urban growth. Another recent theory of urban growth is based on the idea of nucleation within the city. For a statement of it see Chauncey D. Harris and Edward L. Ullman, "The Nature of Cities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 242: 7-17, Nov. 1945.

[31] Amos H. Hawley, review of Walter Firey's *Land Use in Central Boston, American Sociological Review,* 12: 358-360, June, 1947.

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cussed later in this program, since both gentlemen are present.

In spite of the efforts of Quinn,[32] Hollingshead,[33] Firey,[34] Gettys,[35] Hawley,[36] and others to re-examine and restate the position of the ecologists, it appears that they have not extricated themselves from the equivocal problem which the classical writers set for them, namely, that the physical structure of the community is a response to the operation of non-cultural determinants operating in a physical and cultural milieu. Hawley recently defined the field of human ecology as the "descriptive study of the adjustment of human populations to the conditions of their respective physical environments." In a clarifying statement of this position he said:

> Human ecology, then, may be defined more fully as the study of the development and the form of communal structure as it occurs in varying environmental contexts.
>
> The distinctive feature of the study lies in the conception of the adjustment of man to habitat as a process of community development. This is . . . for human ecology the principle working hypothesis.[37]

This statement gives ecology a definite focus, but it also heightens the dilemma, for man is an animal living in physical, biotic and cultural environments. This poses the problem: What aspects of the human community as conceived by the ecologist are attributable to non-cultural and what ones to cultural factors? I wonder how Mr. Hawley, proceeding from his definition, will meet the problem? I also hope that Mr. Firey and Mr. Quinn will respond to this question.

From a strictly theoretical viewpoint one may attribute the adjustments man makes to his habitat, which include the process of community development as well as its structure, to non-cultural factors, as the instinctivists and geographical determinists tend to do, or he may attribute them to purely cultural factors. If one rests his theory on a non-cultural basis, he ignores culture as a conditioning variable and relies upon it merely to illustrate his minor premises. Conversely, if he is a social determinist, he overlooks the non-cultural factors on the one hand, such as climate, terrain, resources, and man as organism, and cultural factors, such as institutions, on the other, and builds his theory almost exclusively on patterned social relations. Neither position is theoretically justifiable, since man is both an animal and a member of a socio-cultural community, and any particularistic explanation which arbitrarily excludes the natural environment, the individual, society, and culture is untenable.

To give this phase of the discussion focus, I shall ask the ecologists three questions. First, in the light of a decade of criticism of ecological theory as enunciated by Park, Burgess, and McKenzie, what ecological constructs—principles or concepts—do you consider to be valid today? Second, how would you define or delimit ecology as a field for scientific investigation? If you think that human ecology is a legitimate field of scientific research, and may eventually become a scientific discipline, do you believe it should be viewed as a field of sociology, or as a separate field, in either the biological or the social sciences?

Social Structure

Studies of social structure subsequent to *Middletown* fall into two broad groups: those made by sociologists and those made by social anthropologists, either within the

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[32] James A. Quinn, "The Nature of Human Ecology—Re-examination and Redefinition," *Social Forces,* 18: 161-168, 1939; "Culture and Ecological Phenomena," *Sociology and Social Research,* XXV: 313-320, Mar. 1941; "The Hypothesis of Median Location," *American Sociological Review,* 8: 148-156, April 1943.

[33] August B. Hollingshead, "A Re-examination of Ecological Theory," *Sociology and Social Research,* 31: 194-204, Jan. 1947.

[34] Walter Firey, "Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables," *American Sociological Review,* 10: 140-204, Jan. 1947.

[35] Warner E. Gettys, "Human Ecology and Social Theory," *Social Forces,* 18: 469-476, 1939.

[36] Amos H. Hawley, "Ecology and Human Ecology," *Social Forces,* 22: 398-405, May 1944.

[37] Amos H. Hawley, *op. cit.,* 404, 405.

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Warner group[38] or allied with it.[39] The Lynds and Warner regarded the social-structure approach as the application of the methods of social anthropology to the study of modern communities.[40]

Both types of "stratificationists" have proceeded on the assumption that inhabitants of a community are aware of differences between themselves which are of such importance to them that their interpersonal relations are organized systematically into horizontally differentiated structures. These distribute the population in social space in such a way that the persons so distributed perform the necessary functions associated with community life; but each stratified segment lives in significantly different ways from the other strata in the system. It is assumed, further, that the essence of community life may be caught by studying the structure of social relations.

The work of the social anthropologists is similar to the sociological product in that it is focussed on the stratification of the community's population into classes, or castes, or both classes and castes. It differs from the sociologist's in its assumptions as to the nature of classes or castes and the effect which stratification has upon personality.

The social anthropologists stratify a community's population, presumably, on the basis of the study of institutional functions, interpersonal relations in associations and cliques, and the attitudes which communal dwellers voice toward one another. Warner states that his research group "discovered"[41] six classes in Yankee City. But precisely how did they do this? We are not told except by indirection. After the classes were "discovered," the residents of Yankee City were statistically placed in the now familiar scheme, down to the last one-hundredth of one per cent.[42] I cannot determine from the text either how this was done or by what criteria. At least eight different kinds of data are mentioned: 1. "associational analysis"; 2. "structural participation"; 3. "area lived in"; 4. "type of house"; 5. "kind of education"; 6. "manners"; 7. "other symbols of class"; and 8. "evaluations of members of Yankee City itself";[43] but there is no discussion of the ways in which these diverse data were combined, weighted, and pieced together to make an index of class, if, indeed, an index was made. Warner and Lunt apologized for their vagueness when they wrote:

> In order to make a complete study it was necessary to locate all of them in one of the six classes, and this we did to the best of our ability on the basis of the entire range of phenomena covered by our data.[44]

The vague procedures of the "Yankee City social anthropologists" stand in sharp contrast to the ones that have been used by sociological students of stratification.[45] The

[38] Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South,* Chicago, 1941; W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Status System of a Modern Community,* New Haven, 1942; W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups,* New Haven, 1945; W. Lloyd Warner and J. O. Low, *The Social System of the Modern Factory,* New Haven, 1947; St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* New York, 1945.

[39] John Dollard, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town,* New Haven, 1937; Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom,* New York, 1939; Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition,* New York, 1937.

[40] Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, *op. cit.,* 3-4; W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community,* New Haven, 1941, 3-5.

[41] Warner and Lunt, *op. cit.,* 81-88.

[42] *Ibid.,* 88.

[43] *Ibid.,* 86, 90.

[44] *Ibid.,* 91.

[45] For examples see: F. Stuart Chapin, *The Measurement of Social Status by the Use of the Social Status Scale,* Minneapolis, Minn., 1933, 3-16; William H. Sewell, *The Construction and Standardization of a Scale for the Measurement of the Socio-Economic Status of Oklahoma Farm Families,* Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, Stillwater, 1940, Technical Bulletin No. 9; George A. Lundberg, "The Measurement of Socio-Economic Status," *American Sociological Review,* 5:29-39, Feb. 1940; Edgar A. Schuler, "Social and Economic Status in a Louisiana Hills Community," Rural Sociology, 5: 69-87, Mar. 1940; John Useem, Pierre Tangent, and Ruth Useem, "Stratification in a Prairie Town," *American Sociological Review,* 7: 331-342, June 1942; Harold F. Kauman, *Prestige Classes in a New York Rural Community,* Memoir 260, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca,

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sociologists have been more aware of technical problems involved in the stratification of a community and, on the whole, they have used objective criteria and explicit techniques to determine the existence of their classes and to place each person within a given class as determined by their technique. This is a problem of the first magnitude in stratification research, and one which the Warner group in their published writings have largely ignored. However, in passing we must note that Warner has become aware of the problem in recent years, and has developed an *index of status,* but he has not published any materials on it to our knowledge.*

The stratificationists are not clear as to whether "class" or "caste" is a heuristic device useful in making differentiations between people with similar and dissimilar attributes, or an entity in its own right. The terms class and caste have become so familiar in lay and professional usage that they are treated as realities whose characteristics are commonly understood. To illustrate, Treudley has written recently:

> Only one individual was interviewed who could be placed definitely in the American lower class, though he had no social contacts even at that level. A few informants either had transferred directly from the upper class in Europe to the same class in the United States or had been so successful here either professionally or artistically as to have achieved an upper class position. More interesting were the informants, again few in number, who were socially isolated from the middle class. Among them were individuals and families who had been in the upper class before their emigration but who could not, for a variety of reasons, establish a foothold in that stratum over here. They preferred isolation to association with the despised "peasants," who in their view made up the Armenian-American middle class. Again there were a few individuals who would have been perfectly satisfied with a middle class position but who could not make the personality adjustments necessary to fit into either the ethnic or the general community.[46]

I, for one, do not know what an American upper, lower, or middle class is; perhaps Swanson or Kaufman will be able to explain precisely what these terms mean! This tendency to reify is evident in the work of the Warner group, where the six classes are treated as real entities. The crucial question is: Are classes entities or constructs? If they are entities, then any competent person should be able to identify, let us say, an American lower class in terms of objective standardized characteristics in a manner comparable to the differentiation between a duck and a goose. If it is a construct, as I personally believe it is, then it can only be derived by the use of methodological procedures which define a class or caste in terms of specified characteristics. Furthermore, a class or caste so derived should not be reified, certainly not in professional literature.

The stratificationists use "class" or "caste" to explain away the complexities and contradictions in human behavior in a way very reminiscent of the early ecologists. The Lynds made this explicit when they wrote:

> . . . it is after all this division into working class and business class that constitutes the outstanding cleavage in Middletown. The mere fact of being born upon one or the other side of the watershed roughly formed by these two groups is the most significant single cultural factor tending to influence what one does all day long throughout one's life.[47]

New York, 1944, 3-46; Harold Kaufman, "Members of a Rural Community as Judges of Prestige Rank," *Sociometry,* IX: 71-85, Feb. 1946; C. Wright Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities," *American Sociological Review,* 11: 520-529, Oct. 1946; August B. Hollingshead, "Selected Characteristics of Classes in a Middle Western Community," *American Sociological Review,* 12: 385-395, Aug. 1947.

* Since this was written Warner has completed his work on the *index* of status. See W. L. Warner, Marchia L. Merker, and Kenneth S. Eells, *The Measurement of Social Status,* Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1948.

[46] Mary Bosworth Treudley, "An Ethnic Group's View of the American Middle Class," *American Sociological Review,* 11: 715-724; quotation from 716, Dec. 1946.

[47] Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown,* 23-24.

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Dollard,[48] Warner,[49] and Allison Davis[50] have gone further in this type of interpretation. They have used the class-caste concept to explain personality and mental disorders, without demonstrating the functional relationship between the assumed conditioning factor (class and/or caste), and its asserted processual result (personality structure). Time and space preclude the development of this point, but it could be used as the basis of a critical treatise comparable to the work which Blumer did on *The Polish Peasant*.[51]

The Typological Approach

The typologists have studied the community from the viewpoints of its culture, its relations to other communities, its geographic and economic bases, its size, and its population composition, to determine how *these factors organize and give meaning to the activities and interpersonal relations of its inhabitants*. They are interested in isolating forms of social organization for the purpose of constructing ideal-typical community types. They assume that a given complex of population, culture, and communal organization gives rise to a characteristic way of life, with a correlated complex of *meanings* and personality types. This idea is rooted deeply in folk beliefs. It is commonly assumed that there are city types, rural types, town attitudes, and farm attitudes. The rural and the city "mind" are other expressions of this viewpoint. Durkheim's sacred and secular, and Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* are the formal models of this type of thinking. This polarized patterning has been grafted onto the development of rural and urban sociology in America so that today each discipline is concerned with the study of social life and the meaning it has for village and farm people, town and city dwellers.

Currently the typological approach enjoys considerable popularity with a few anthropologists and many sociologists; Wirth,[52] Zimmerman,[53] Taylor,[54] Loomis,[55] Heberle,[56] and Angell[57] to name but a few who are interested in studying communities and "typing" them within some larger theoretical frame of reference, such as the folk-urban continuum of Redfield[58] or the stability-instability construct which the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life followed in its study of six rural communities.[59]

Is there anything new in the typological approach which was not present in the works of the social scientists who have used

[48] John Dollard, *op. cit.*, 62-97.

[49] W. Lloyd Warner, "The Society, The Individual and His Mental Disorders," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 94: 275-284, Sep. 1937.

[50] Allison Davis, "Socialization and Adolescent Personality" *Forty-Third Year Book, Part I, National Society for Study of Education*, 1944, 198-216.

[51] Herbert Blumer, An Appraisal of Thomas and Znaniecki's, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Critiques of Research in the Social Sciences: I, Bulletin 44, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1939.

[52] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV: 1-24, July, 1938.

[53] Carle C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community*, New York, 1938, esp. 1-28.

[54] C. C. Taylor in Ralph Linton (editor) *op. cit.*

[55] Rudolf Heberle, "The Application of Fundamental Concepts in Rural Community Studies," *Rural Sociology*, 6: 203-215, Sep. 1941.

[56] Charles P. Loomis, *Social Relationships and Institutions in Seven New Rural Communities*, U.S.D.A. Social Research Report No. XVIII, Washington, D.C., 1940.

[57] Robert C. Angell, "The Social Integration of American Cities of More than 100,000 Population," *American Sociological Review*, 12: 335-342, June 1947.

[58] Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," *American Journal of Sociology*, LII: 293-311, Jan. 1947.

[59] *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community, Rural Life Studies*, Numbers 1-6, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. Number 1. Olen Leonard and C. P. Loomis, *El Cerrito, New Mexico*, 1941; Number 2. Earl H. Bell, *Sublette, Kansas*, 1942; Number 3. Kenneth Macleish and Kimball Young, *Landaff, New Hampshire*, 1942; Number 4. Walter M. Kollmorgan, *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County Pennsylvania*, 1942; Number 5. Edward O. Moe and Carl C. Taylor, *Irwin, Iowa*, 1942; and Number 6. Walter Wynne, *Harmony, Georgia*, 1943. James West, *Plainville, U. S. A.*, is essentially a typological study, but it has certain elements associated with the stratification approach in it.

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comparative methods? Secondly, I wonder if the typologists are not fitting their data procrustean-like into a mold and ignoring many significant aspects of the empirical world. Moreover, they appear to reify their types. I am thinking here of Zimmerman's "real" and "nominal" communities.[60] A fourth point worth noting is the obvious incongruity between the descriptions of social organization in the same type of area as seen by different writers. I am thinking particularly of the slum as depicted by Zorbaugh[61] and by Whyte.[62] Swanson has worked in this area, and he may have some comments upon this and other points relevant to the emphases of the typologists.

By way of appraisal, it may be said that students of the community have amassed a greater store of facts about American life, as it is lived in specific places in our era, than any other group of social scientists. I believe that it is safe to assert they have collected more data, on more aspects of life, its motives, goals, achievements, and failures, than have been assembled in any other comparable period in world history. This is no mean achievement. By so doing, they have learned many things about the structure and operation of our society on the specific everyday community level. They have also formulated some generalizing constructs designed to explain the empirical facts which they have observed and/or discovered. Unquestionably, students of community life have made notable steps in the direction of realizing the ideal of an eventual nomothetic science. However, the meticulous observation of facts, although absolutely necessary for the development of a scientific sociology, has often been marked by a tendency to skip some of the steps necessary to reach the goal of a science based on empirically derived laws.

If the maturity of a scientific discipline is measured by the clarity of its terminology, the precision of its concepts, the articulation of hypotheses and constructs with general theory, and the congruity of theoretical generalizations with empirical observations,[63] then the field of community, within the larger sociological domain, lies on a very low level of scientific development. Sociologists are neither sure of what they mean by such basic terms as "city," "community," "neighborhood," and "ecology," nor are they consistent with one another in their usage. Ordinarily these terms are used in such loose and indefinite ways that the reader is unable to determine precisely what a given author means by the words he uses. The term "community" is defined in at least three different ways in current literature: 1. as a form of group solidarity, cohesion, and action around common and diverse interests; 2. as a geographic area with spatial limits; or 3. a socio-geographical structure which combines the ideas embodied in 1. and 2. Clearly it cannot be all three. Kollmorgan and Harrison recently subjected the concept "community," as used by rural sociologists, to a searching analysis.[64] Their criticism, however, would apply with equal force to urban sociologists, ecologists, and social anthropologists. In view of this, every student of social life in local areas must be careful of the way he uses his terms. Thus, one of the basic problems students of the community should face is *clarification of terminology*. The first step in the solution of this problem is the definition of terms; and the second is the limitation of the terms, as defined, to empirical phenomena to which they are applicable.

Further development of theory in this field appears to be dependent upon greater precision in methodological procedures—definition of terms and constructs, classifi-

[60] Carle C. Zimmerman, *op. cit.*

[61] Harvey Zorbaugh, *op. cit.*, 127-158.

[62] William F. Whyte, *Street Corner Society*, Chicago, 1943, and "Social Organization in the Slums," *American Sociological Review*, 8: 34-39, Feb. 1943.

[63] Florian Znaniecki, "Controversies in Doctrine and Method," *American Journal of Sociology*, L: 514-521, May, 1945; George A. Lunberg, *Social Research*, New York, 1942, 1-30, 84-86; Frederick J. Teggart, *Theory of History*, New Haven, 1925, 153-165.

[64] Walter Kollmorgan *et al*, Harrison, "Search for the Rural Community," *Agricultural History*, 20: 1-7, Jan. 1946.

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cation, formulation of hypotheses with dependent theorems and postulates, and the empirical test of such hypotheses and constructs—rather than continued collection of facts about life in a local area without regard to the objectives to be achieved. In conclusion, I believe that the time has come when investigators should think primarily in terms of the development of a coherent body of theory about the community, and should use this idea rather than the collection of facts for facts' sake as their frame of reference when they go to the field.

DISCUSSION

James A. Quinn
University of Cincinnati

Professor Hollingshead has posed several questions to be answered by human ecologists. In slightly altered form and order four of them may be stated as follows:

(1) What aspects of the human community are attributable to cultural and what ones to non-cultural factors?
(2) How should human ecology be defined and delimited as a field for scientific investigation?
(3) Should human ecology be viewed as a field of sociology, or as a separate field in either the biological or the social sciences?
(4) What ecological principles or concepts seem valid today?

I shall center my part of this discussion around these four questions and shall give brief but specific answers to or comments on each of them.

The first question, which involves the dichotomy of cultural versus non-cultural aspects of the human community, stems from certain statements made by Park, possibly misunderstood, but often vigorously attacked by his critics, to the effect that human ecology studies the "natural" non-cultural as contrasted with the cultural aspects of areas. I wish to state as vigorously as possible that this dichotomy of cultural versus non-cultural has no value whatsoever either for delimiting the field of human ecology or in making ecological studies of human communities. Sociological students of human ecology know that most ecological relations among men necessarily involve culture. When men compete for ecological position or for limited resources of the environment they ordinarily reflect cultural influences in three ways: (1) in the specific forms of inner needs they strive to satisfy, (2) in the specific meanings given to the environmental resources they utilize, and (3) in the specific knowledge, skills, and tools they use in the ecological processes of adjustment. Therefore, any implication that human ecology deals with non-cultural as contrasted with cultural aspects of the human community is incorrect and misleading.

The next two questions, dealing respectively with the definition of human ecology and its relations to other academic disciplines are so closely related that they can best be answered together. Inclusiveness of definition necessarily affects the conception of logical relations between human ecology and traditional disciplines.

I have no *logical* objection to the inclusive definition given in the *Dictionary of Sociology* which identifies human ecology as "that branch of science which treats of the reciprocal relations between man and environment." This broad definition has value in emphasizing adjustmental relations between man and environment as the central distinguishing feature of human ecology; but at the same time the inclusiveness of this definition logically necessitates the extension of human ecology into several traditional academic disciplines, both social and biological. The great variety of data, techniques, concepts, and hypotheses necessary to investigate all aspects of the relations between man and environment makes it impracticable for any research scientist to master all of them. *Practically,* therefore, the broad field of human ecology thus defined must continue to be split among traditional divisions of science.

For purposes of the present discussion, however, I shall neglect all biological studies, especially those that deal with single individual organisms, and shall consider only group adjustments to environment such as legitimately fall within the range of social science. Furthermore, in order to simplify this discussion still more and to point it specifically toward the topic of this meeting, namely *Community Research,* I shall restrict my remarks entirely to studies of the spatial structure of communities. The community is one of the major types of areas studied by human ecologists, and its spatial pattern is one of the more obvious aspects of group adjustment to environment.

Even if human ecology were to be limited to

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studying the spatial structure of communities it should be conceived as a marginal field of social science. It would include some aspects of geography because varying conditions of topography directly influence the spatial pattern; some aspects of history because the inertia of past settlement influences contemporary structure; and some aspects of sociology because interrelations among men play a fundamental part in determining the spatial pattern of most human communities. If, therefore, human ecology seeks to give a relatively complete explanation of the spatial structure of communities it logically must be conceived as a marginal and perhaps as a separate field of social study.

This integrative, synthesizing conception of human ecology which aims at relatively complete explanation of areal spatial structure, seems quite valid. Moreover, it probably is the most useful point of view that has been developed, at least in so far as a given concrete community is concerned, because it affords an indispensable basis for sound areal planning and it gives valuable guidance to private owners and utilizers of space. Acceptance of this point of view does not deny, however, the need for other narrower lines of theoretical ecological research within the framework of traditional social disciplines, especially in geography and sociology.

Specialized fields of ecological research in geography and sociology seem justified when one considers the analytic as contrasted with the synthesizing function of science. In its analytic procedures science always makes abstractions from reality. Such analysis never, in itself, offers a complete explanation of any concrete phenomenon. Analytic procedures always strive to neutralize most aspects of concrete reality, either by abstraction or by holding them constant, meanwhile seeking to establish generalizations about repetitive relations between those few factors that have been selected for intensive study. It is my belief that these narrower analytic studies can best be pursued within the specialized frame of reference of traditional disciplines. I believe, therefore, that separate specialized branches of human ecology should be maintained in geography and sociology. My own preference is that the former should be labeled as "human geography," the latter as "interactional ecology."

The basic function of the specialized sociological (interactional) ecologist in community research is to discover those repetitive regularities in the areal structure and distribution of human phenomena which depend on interactions among men. These interrelations occur chiefly at the "sub-social" ecological level when men utilize limited environmental resources on which others depend, or when they utilize limited space which others wish to use or control, or when they alter ecological distances by affecting the efficiency of transportation or by developing new sources of supply. In seeking repetitive regularities in community relations the interactional ecologist strives to discover what typical areal structures would emerge and what repetitive changes would occur (1) if no environmental barriers or inequalities existed within the community, (2) if culture remained constant, and (3) if the effects of historical inertia had been neutralized through careful analysis. Because he deals only with limited partial aspects of the community, the analytical interactional ecologist never presumes to offer a complete explanation of any concrete areal pattern. His contributions are, nevertheless, one essential part of making a complete explanation of areal structures possible.

Because of his knowledge about community structure and the processes of change which alter it, the interactional ecologist may help to explain the nature and distributions of various human phenomena such as population, property, institutional patterns, and social problems. Such studies should, in my opinion, be regarded as marginal between ecology and other branches of sociology, and not as constituting the heart of interactional ecology.

Let me finally list some of the concepts and hypotheses that apply to community studies and that seem valid and useful within the field of interactional ecology as defined above.

Among the valid concepts of community spatial structure I would list such ones as ecological distance, ecological position, dominance, gradient, natural area, and zone. Valid concepts of ecological process include ecological interaction with its sub-forms of cooperation and competition, and the sequential processes of aggregation, expansion, concentration, centralization, segregation, invasion, succession, migration, and mobility. Each of these concepts requires precise definition within human ecology, which definitions may differ considerably from usages in other divisions of sociology. When properly defined, however, each concept becomes a useful tool for studying repetitive regulari-

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ties in those aspects of structure and change which depend on interrelations among men.

As illustrations of ecological principles, three presumably valid hypotheses that underlie community spatial structure may be suggested without elaboration: (1) the hypothesis of minimum ecological distance which states that, other costs being fixed, ecological units tend to distribute themselves throughout space so as to minimize the cost-distance* of transporting men and materials; (2) the hypothesis of median location, which states that the most efficient location for any ecological unit is at the median (weighted) of all units which are to be transported to and from it; and (3) the hypothesis of intensiveness of utilization which states that when two units compete for a common median location, that one tends to occupy it which utilizes the location most intensively. Such general principles may have great value in explaining the spatial structure of a concrete area but, by themselves, they are not sufficient to give a complete explanation of it.

DISCUSSION

Harold F. Kaufman
University of Kentucky

As the ecological section of Prof. Hollingshead's paper has been treated, I shall confine my remarks to the section on social structure and more specifically to the discussion of community stratification. Several basic questions are raised and criticisms made concerning current research on social stratification. These include a question as to the nature of the class concept and a criticism of "vague procedures" which have been employed in the study of stratification. Investigators who fail to demonstrate the functional relationship between class and other social factors and processes, and those who assume class groupings are obvious to all are also criticized.

Is the term *social class* a "heuristic device" or "an entity in its own right"? This raises the question concerning the nature of scientific concepts. Such a question deserves attention because much confusion in sociological thinking results from the lack of an explicit and clear-cut notion on this point. Conception is the classification and symbolization of a series of perceptions. The world of events is given unity and meaning through the concept which is an abstraction of the common element in a series of perceptions.

The nature of the concept is determined by its relation to the world of events or "the something out there." A concept is a product of (1) the knowing operation and (2) a series of events. Notions concerning the nature of scientific concepts vary in terms of the emphasis placed on the above two elements. For the discussant both the knowing operation and the event is important (modified positivism). Thus the concept is essentially a construct; it is scientifically useful if it (and related constructs) gives a pattern of experience which is concise, internally consistent and predictable.

The position taken in the paper under discussion that social class is a construct is, therefore, accepted, but it should be hastily added that the class concept is not unique in this respect. Some writers have distinguished between "real" and nominalistic" notions of class. Except for the fact that they regard their definitions of class as the "real" ones, the basis for this distinction is not entirely clear. Perhaps a concept is regarded as "real" or "an entity in its own right" if its empirical referant is identified with ease. In the case of a social grouping this would mean that the interaction pattern or other characteristics by which individuals could be identified as belonging to the same grouping were obvious to the layman. Although useful, ease of definition alone does not determine the value of a scientific concept. The basic question is not whether the class concept is "real" or "nominal," but (1) By what procedures is it defined? and (2) How is it related to other constructs—the content of the term?

A consideration of method of definition leads to Prof. Hollingshead's second criticism, namely, the "vague procedure" employed by some investigators in defining class. Three types of definitions have been distinguished (by the Subcommittee on the Definition of Definition of the Committee on Conceptual Integration of the American Sociological Society)—the genetic, the analytical and the identifying. One employs a genetic or an operational definition when he describes the procedures by which a concept is defined. An analytical definition is followed when a given concept is related to significant constructs or factors, and the question is answered, What is it? "Vague procedures" have been the result when an investigator has failed

* Cost is here used in the broad sense to include whatever is given up, and not in the narrow sense of mere economic cost.

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to make explicit his methodology or research operations.

The three methods most commonly employed in determining class rank are (1) ratings of selected judges, (2) socio-economic scales and (3) single criterion such as income or occupation. The rating method of class definition need not be vague but may be quite explicit and rigorous as is shown in Prof. Hollingshead's study of "Elmtown." The most scientifically useful procedure of class definition in any given situation would be the one that would give the highest prediction (i.e., most highly correlated with each of the factors forming the class complex), and could be employed with the greatest ease.

The third type of question raised by the paper under discussion concerns the nature or essence of the class structure. Many writers have named this "something" status but more work is needed in developing a model or ideal type class or status structure. The notion of status arises from the observation that some individuals are more respected; their behavior has greater value or prestige than have the actions of others. Status is recognized when individuals act and react toward each other as equals, superiors, or inferiors. Almost all social relationships and structures have a status aspect. Some of the factors noted most frequently by which status is recognized are material possessions, social participation, income, level of consumption, political power and morals. A person's overall or community status, however, is a composite of his statuses in the various social structures and groupings in which he is involved. Because of this status groupings or structure would very seldom if ever be identical with income, ethnic or other groupings.

Prof. Hollingshead justifiably criticizes certain investigators for assuming that given class groupings are obvious and thus no need exists for making one's research procedures and assumptions explicit. He asks, e.g., "What an American upper, middle or lower class is." Some progress toward answering this question has been made, yet much remains to be done. Certainly an investigator in describing given class groupings needs to make his method, including his position in the research situation and the universe studied explicit. Would not the characteristics of the middle class vary from rural to urban communities and from society to society? Also, is it defined as the middle grouping on an occupational, income or other type of continuum, or is it a grouping to be recognized by certain characteristics, attitudes and behavior patterns? Perhaps in a general way both questions may be answered in the affirmative, but "why" and "how much" is a research problem concerning which a priori judgment is inappropriate.

In view of the above limitations, what contributions have been made in the field of community stratification? First, class research has created considerable interest both professional and lay in understanding this important aspect of our present day society. Second, definite strides have been made in defining class operationally. Third, data are accumulating concerning the characteristics of various class groupings.

In conclusion a comment on typology may be in order. Class or status groupings are only one aspect of community structure. A comprehensive typology must await a clear-cut definition of significant structural variables—status and others. The somewhat impressionistic typology thus far has resulted from the use of ill-defined and implicit criteria. It is not only necessary to clearly define significant variables but it is also desirable to interrelate them so as to discover the most meaningful clusters and types. In this respect the development of folk-urban types is promising.

DISCUSSION

G. E. Swanson
University of Chicago

Professor Hollingshead's paper makes it evident that students of ecology and the community share problems faced by other sociologists. They find difficulty in defining their specialty, in clarifying the concepts they use, in determining the relative importance of given areas for future investigation, and in choosing suitable techniques for their research.

The focus of "human ecology" is a subject of long dispute. The concept "community" is not much clearer. We find it identified with groupings that range from neighborhoods to regions. In actual practice, students seem to be caught up in the awareness of the substructuring present: of status relations, classes, voluntary associations, ethnic groups, family systems, occupational groups, age categories, and of others that can be studied as *parts* of a given *society* without too much concern about identifying smaller local units. This may be prophetic. Perhaps the

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next decades will bring still fewer studies of the "community" as such.

Like other sociologists, the human ecologists and the students of the community are working to develop their concepts. Here, too, they share the growing enthusiasm for one variety of operationalism as an answer to criticisms that their ideas are vague, imprecise, unstandardized, and subjective. Objects are equated to the steps employed in their "measurement," or to the quantitative result of that measurement. This trend continues apparently uninfluenced by such critiques as those of Franz Adler,[1] Gordon Allport,[2] Herbert Blumer,[3] Robert McIver,[4] Ethel Shanas,[5] and N. S. Timasheff.[6]

The concept of "social class" is a case in point. When the first volume of the Yankee City series[7] was published, C. Wright Mills[8] pointed out that Warner and Lunt gave a catch-all definition to the term "class," and did not describe their method for stratifying the population of Newburyport. A. B. Hollingshead[9] and Harold Kaufman,[10] among others, constructed indices of class. Recently, W. Lloyd Warner has provided a similar "scale" for stratification. From each of these we obtain a numerical index. We are told that these numbers are points on a continuum of status or class as the case may be. "But what is the nature of the status or class continuum on which these are the points?" we ask. The answer seems to be, "It is the continuum on which these are the points." The index ranks status, and status is defined as that which the index ranks.

As one commentator[11] points out, this procedure is an act of reduction at the expense of the concept's empirical nature with which one is concerned. It can only be successful as a definition, he continues, when the item referred to is essentially quantitative in nature. The method does isolate a stable content, but that content is an unknown quantity. Having an unknown character, the item cannot be studied. It does not stand for a problem to be investigated. It cannot be generically extended. The quantitative result only becomes intelligible when translated into a definition of a kind that is different from a "measurement."

Now it is possible that once we determine what we mean by class or status, we shall find some indices of those objects of study which may be used for stratifying a population, but the construction of such indices prior to the identification of the concept does not tell us anything about the nature of that concept.

Whether statuses and classes are entities that can be separated out in a clean-cut fashion remains to be seen. Certainly there are continua of economic position, of power, and of prestige in society, and it seems reasonable that indices of position on those continua can be constructed. Those in existence already differentiate significantly among varied ways of life. They are valuable in this respect. They are dangerous if they become substitutes for more adequate explorations of the reality they represent, or if they turn attention away from such explorations. At best, they are indices of something, and their usefulness derives from our knowledge of that underlying reality.

Professor Hollingshead suggests that some typologists are fitting their data into a "procrustean mold and ignoring many significant aspects of the empirical world." One can certainly find instances of that practice. However, as Hollingshead states, by their very nature, types are not intended as exact reproductions of the empirical world, but as simplified generalizations about selected features that are useful for studying some problem, for prediction and for eliminating the mass of particulars found irrelevant to a specific question. There is probably no community in which life actually exists

[1] Franz Adler "Operational Definitions in Sociology," *The American Journal of Sociology,* LII (1947), 438-444.

[2] Gordon W. Allport "The Psychologist's Frame of Reference," *Psychological Bulletin,* XXXVII (1940), 20-21.

[3] Herbert Blumer "The Problem of the Concept in Social Psychology," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLV (1940), 707-719.

[4] Robert M. McIver *Social Causation* (Boston, 1942), pp. 157-158.

[5] Ethel Shanas "Comment," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLVIII (1943), 489-491.

[6] N. S. Timasheff "Definitions in the Social Sciences," *The American Journal of Sociology,* LIII (1947), 201-209.

[7] W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (Yankee City Series, Volume I), (New Haven, 1941).

[8] In a book review in *American Sociological Review,* VII (1942), 263-271.

[9] A. B. Hollingshead "Selected Characteristics of Classes in a Middle Western Community," *American Sociological Review,* XII (1947), 385-395.

[10] Harold F. Kaufman *Prestige Classes in a New York Rural Community* (Memoir 260, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station), (Ithaca, 1944).

[11] Blumer, *op. cit.*

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as described in Wirth's[12] discussions of urbanism. He has chosen the salient features of a way of life. He has shown their interrelations. He has pointed to the direction in which change is occurring.

To me, the problem of the urban slum as a type is of particular interest. Zorbaugh's[13] description arises from studies of the inhabitants of a rooming-house area. Whyte[14] lived in, and described, one Italian residential area in Boston. These sections are quite different in structure. The resultant descriptions reflect those differences. Earlier this year, I spent some time in an area usually described as one of the worst slums of an eastern industrial city. There was evidence of the existence of the patterns described by both Zorbaugh and Whyte. In addition, it became apparent that most of the citizens were not isolated, mobile individuals, nor were their lives organized around professional vice and gambling. Their value system was very like that one might expect to find in what Warner calls a lower-middle class community.

Perhaps typologies of the slum are premature. Perhaps such attempts need to be approached with new perspectives. In any case, the empirical discrepancies with our present constructs pose a vital problem for those who wish to link such phenomena as delinquency or mental disorders to types of community life.

In looking back over the development and present status of the field of the community, we find many studies of particular areas and of specific problems—studies that are rich with intimate details of human living. But these pictures are largely still-lifes.

It is a truism that all societies change. It is a commonplace that our own way of life is now characterized by widespread and profound changes exhibited in the loosening and disruption of traditional communal bonds and in the increase of personal freedom. In this changing social medium, human individuals and human groups meet problems for which there are no established solutions. New experience, and dissatisfaction with the established order, abound. It is this evident process of change that tends to escape our studies.

Part of the difficulty may lie in our use of conceptual schemes that are designed to picture a relatively stable way of life. I am thinking now of such concepts as status, class, institutions, and structure. By their nature, these ideas make it difficult to see the process of change, to raise significant questions about the nature of that process, and to plan research designed to answer those questions.

However, the difficulty may lie still deeper in our theoretical schemes. There is a tendency among many students to equate the concept of society with that of culture. The resultant blurring of the shifting, dynamic processes of interaction, that underlie the formal structure of accepted rules and practices at any given time, leaves us unable to account for the changes that appear in that formal structure. It focuses our attention in other directions. Often, we add to this the assumption that man is a kind of neutral creature buffeted about by the natural environment, by society, and by culture. Yet, the idea that man is the active agent in changing his society and culture is not new in sociology. Sumner, for example, described the societal selection of the mores as a process through which men act collectively to change their world. It is characteristic of many, perhaps most, contemporary students that they ignore this description and concentrate, instead, on a picture of the traditional rules molding human behavior.

This problem of the nature and process of social change deserves a concerted research effort from students of the community. There are some suggestive, and some inadequate, publications by specialists in many fields dealing with the question. Little has been done to systematize and test these hypotheses.

Certain studies appear as among those appropriate for students of the changing community. I have in mind the study of communications and of communication, of the rise of new personality types, of the developing phenomenon of mass behavior, of the dissatisfactions with current value systems, of the voluntary associations and the social movements that symptomize the areas in which change is occurring and the directions in which it moves, of those situations that people regard as crises, of shifts in the process of socialization, of the growing opportunities for individuals to have somewhat unique experiences inside the social structure, of the appearance of isolation and of loneliness and of anomie. These, and countless other problems,

[12] Louis Wirth "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLIV (1938), 1-24.

[13] Harvey W. Zorbaugh *The Gold Coast and the Slum* (Chicago, 1929).

[14] William F. Whyte *Street Corner Society* (Chicago, 1943).

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can be studied in a manner to reflect back upon the nature of social change.

The possibilities of accounting for the changing community and for predicting the nature of communities in the future appear to lie in this direction. The development and testing of a suitable conceptual framework is a prerequisite for realizing those possibilities.

DISCUSSION

Walter Firey
University of Texas

Dr. Hollingshead's paper had raised a number of interesting problems concerning the status and prospects of community and ecological research. In line with the plan for this symposium I shall confine my own remarks to just a few of these problems, namely those more strictly ecological in character. In so doing, however, I do not wish to lose sight of Hollingshead's point that, in a very real sense, the development of ecology as a field of inquiry has been but a phase in the broader development of community theory and research. Indeed, I would go even further and suggest that the future prospects for ecology are going to vary in direct relation to its rapprochement with general community theory and research.

Implied in this statement is the idea that ecological processes are at every point corollary to, and contingent upon, social and cultural processes operating at the community level. One cannot, in other words, dissociate the ecological from the social or cultural—the "biotic" from the "moral"—if one would have a valid ecological theory. It is precisely through its false dichotomy between these two components that ecology has come to its present impasse, in which it lacks both logical integration and empirical adequacy. The whole trend of research and criticism during the past decade has emphasized the untenable character of this dichotomy.

A number of implications follow from this position. Consider the problem posed by Hollingshead in his question concerning the relative influence of the physical and biotic environments as against the cultural environment. He asks: "What aspects of the human community as conceived by the ecologist are attributable to non-cultural and what ones to cultural factors?" In terms of the position just outlined, the answer to this question is clear. There can be no environment apart from that which is defined into being by social and cultural processes. Indeed, it is *mal à propos* to speak of an environment which, in the words of George H. Mead, is "just there." For as Mead has rather aptly put it, "The community as such *creates* its environment by being sensitive to it." (*Mind, Self and Society*, p. 250. Italics mine.) Such a viewpoint in no way denies the causativeness of non-cultural factors; it merely indicates that their causativeness is mediate, that cultural factors intervene at every point between non-cultural factors and the human community.

This reasoning is quite consistent with Hawley's definition of ecology, which I find rather useful, *viz.*, that "Human ecology . . . (is) the study of the development and the form of communal structure as it occurs in varying environmental contexts." (quoted in Hollingshead, *supra*). But from this it does not follow that these "varying environmental contexts" are metaphysically real things which are "just there." Rather they are social and cultural constructs. To be sure, natural phenomena and objects, such as rivers and mountains, do have an objective reality. But, however real they may be, these phenomena do not become "environments" until they are defined as such by particular societies having particular cultures which render those phenomena behaviorally meaningful.

This reasoning leads us to another of the questions raised by Hollingshead. He asks: "What ecological constructs—principles or concepts—do you consider to be valid today?" A great many of the ecological constructs which we have inherited and with which we work in our research have had real heuristic value. Such constructs as "time-cost distance," "competition," "natural areas," and "biotic community" have served a useful function by orienting our research activities into theoretically significant directions. To be sure, the resulting data have on occasion compelled us to redefine some of these concepts (e.g., "natural area") and in some cases to even discontinue their use (e.g., "biotic community"). But that is the way in which science develops. In physics the concept of "energy" has come to mean a very different thing than it did twenty-five years ago. Concepts have a certain instability of reference, being subject to change through the demands of empirical data, through the varying formulations of problems, and through the strain toward logical consistency in theoretical schemes.

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It is therefore difficult to say just which ecological concepts are valid today. From one point of view, very few of them are valid, if one has only in mind the logical requirements of systematic theory, namely, the formulation of strictly homologous concepts or variables; the arrangement of these variables into propositions which specify determinate relationships between the variables; and, finally, the logical deducibility of each of these propositions from any combination of two or more other propositions in the systems. In these respects ecological constructs are today quite inadequate.

From another point of view, however, a great many of our ecological constructs have a real pragmatic validity, insofar as they represent tentative tools by which we apprehend a significant segment of social reality. Whatever ecology is to be fifteen years from now, it will certainly show a direct continuity with the ecology of today, and its concepts too will have a generic relationship with those of today.

The concept of "competition" may be a case in point. In orthodox ecology the competitive process was viewed as something "sub-cultural" and automatic. It was posited as the dynamic regulative process underlying the spatial and temporal aspects of communal structure. Now indubitably competition is an identifiable process that may be observed in all societies, whatever their culture. But what people compete for, the terms on which they compete, the communicative and exchange channels through which they compete, and the manner in which they routinize and organize their competition—all these are culturally defined. It is putting the cart before the horse to ascribe causal priority to competition and to regard the cultural context as merely epiphenomenal. The truth is more nearly the other way around. Accordingly the concept of "competition" is sure to be redefined as ecological research and systematization progress. One can grant that "competition" is indeed a "valid" concept, but, like all other scientific constructs, it is tentatively rather than immutably so.

The same reasoning applies to such ecological generalizations as: "The market integrates competition"; or "the metropolis dominates the rural hinterland." Certainly these are "valid" propositions, but only to a first approximation. We must go further and ask: What forms does competition assume in different social structures? What are the cultural prerequisites for the very existence of certain kinds of markets (the department store, for instance)? How is dominance mediated by social structures such as class distinctions, ethnic cleavages, and differential institutional participation? Only insofar as such social and cultural variables become integrated with ecological theory can these propositions be consonant both with empirical data and with the logical requirements of a closed theoretical system. The validity of these propositions is therefore real, but only approximately so.

Let me turn briefly now to the third of Hollingshead's points, that concerning the status of ecology as a formal discipline. There seems to be, I think, an increasing acceptance of the view that ecology is a marginal or borderline discipline. This position has been developed most fully by Gettys and Quinn, both of whom liken ecology to such other marginal fields as social psychology, social anthropology, and physical chemistry. Such a viewpoint comports very well with the present-day trend toward social science unification and the breaking down of departmental barriers. Certainly the adequacy of ecological analysis will be increased insofar as it succeeds in assimilating the data and the insights of geography, economics, and geopolitics as well as those of sociology.

In this fusion of research data from fields so divergent in their traditional preoccupations and approaches, the role of systematic theory will be paramount. The time has indeed come, as Hollingshead reminds us, when ecological research, and community research in general, must be increasingly oriented toward the testing of fundamental hypotheses and the gradual development of a coherent body of community theory.

DISCUSSION

Amos H. Hawley
University of Michigan

Dr. Hollingshead has raised a number of pointed questions which I shall attempt to answer in a discussion of the role of human ecology in community research.

Ever since sociologists turned from a preoccupation with concepts to seek an empirical basis for their theories the community has come increasingly into the focus of their attention. While it may be impossible to set down the historical reasons for this concentration of interest, it is in accord with some very sound methodological considerations. Perhaps the most important of these is that for a great number

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of social phenomena the community is the least reducible universe of cause and effect relations. Any smaller social unit would fail to contain a sufficient number of relevant variables; any larger unit would prove unmanageable. A second advantage attached to the community as an object of study is that it is the most nearly comparable unit part of different societies. Hence the community provides a valuable basis for many types of comparative studies.

Needless to say, human ecology has played an influential part in directing the interests of sociologists to the community. The organismic position of human ecology, its emphasis on the importance of locale and the frictions of space, its encouragement of field research on specific problems of structure, and the vast amount of research product it has inspired have all contributed to that end. In addition to its general effect on the orientation of sociology, human ecology has presented us with a large mass of descriptive materials on the spatial pattern of the community. While many of the descriptive formulations that were made, e.g., the concentric zonal hypothesis, natural areas, succession, etc., must be regarded as first approximations to a dependable knowledge of spatial distributions of community elements, they have not yet been supplanted by more adequate conceptualizations. They are in wide use today by sociologists, urban geographers, city planners and others concerned with spatial configurations of communities.[1]

Too little attention, however, has been given to the implications of spatial patterns. Apparently spatial analysis, in the minds of many people, is a means to practical but not theoretical ends. But let us ask the question: What is it that is assumed to be patterned in space? Surely it is not merely the physical components of settlement. Nor does it seem likely that the incidences of delinquency, mental disorder, broken homes and the like are all that is involved. I hardly believe that simple "Rorschach blots" on the landscape interest us as sociologists. Rather I suggest that what is assumed to be spatially patterned is community structure, that is, the organization of relationships by which men sustain themselves. There seems to be no other theoretical justification for a concern with space. On the other hand, there is much to recommend such an assumption. Men live close to the ground, in a space-time universe, as it were. It might be expected therefore that distance, however it may be encountered, would affect the number, the periodicity, and even the content of interrelationships. In short, given the assumption that community structure manifests itself in a spatial pattern, we have a ready means of measuring and of communicating the complexities of man's collective life.

Granted this, it now appears that the possibilities of spatial analysis as an approach to knowledge of community structure have been virtually exhausted. At any rate, while our knowledge of distributions has been progressively refined, our knowledge of structure has not advanced correspondingly. One may fairly argue, in fact, that ecologists have worked from the wrong end. Perhaps they would have been wiser to have first established the principles of community structure before undertaking to determine the expression of structure in space. What was adopted as an assumption might better have been regarded as an hypothesis. Still, in view of the state of sociological thinking twenty-five years ago there may have been no practical alternative to the course that was followed. We could debate this question at considerable length, but the outcome would add nothing to the progress of knowledge. The point I wish to make is simply that it is time ecologists devoted their efforts to the study of community structure.

We should not slight the earlier attempts of ecologists to examine the organization of the community apart from its distributed aspect. R. E. Park's conception of biotic, economic, cultural, and moral levels of behavior, though quite unsatisfactory, was a gesture in that direction.[2] Likewise the frequent use of concepts such as symbiosis, division of labor, equilibrium, and dominance are indicative of a similar interest. On occasion, albeit all too infrequently, ecologists have carried their interest in structure into empirical work. That is witnessed, for example, by studies of the types of service agencies in cities and of the relation of service agencies to the size and composition of popula-

[1] For a recent evidence of this see Robert E. Dickinson, *City, Region and Regionalism* (London: Kegan Paul, 1947).

[2] "Human Ecology," *The American Journal of Sociology*, XLIII (July, 1936), 1-15. See also the same author's "The Urban Community as A Spatial Pattern and A Moral Order," in E. W. Burgess (ed.), *The Urban Community* (Chicago, 1926), 3-18.

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tion.[3] One important consequence of this preliminary work has been to reveal that time and space are not the only frictions that operate in relationships; there are others in the form of the population requirements of different functions, the dependence of one function upon another, the necessity that all functions be coordinated, etc. But as I previously stated, very little has been accomplished in the development of principles of community structure.

Now, as it happens, community structure may be attacked from a variety of viewpoints including human ecology, social anthropology, and other sociological specialisms that are not so explicitly named. Human ecology differs from its kindred approaches in its statement of problem and in its method. The ecological problem is: How does a population organize to maintain itself in a given area? This places an emphasis on sustenance relations, yet sustenance relations are regarded as constituting only the general framework of the community. To find the answer to his problem the ecologist must be able to trace out the ramifications of sustenance activities and ascertain the degree to which they affect and are in turn affected by other kinds of activities. Thus the community is viewed from the ecological standpoint as an adaptive mechanism in which all of the parts have or tend to have functional relationships to one another.

The method of the ecologist is conditioned by the fact that his unit of study is a population rather than an individual. One effect of this is to limit ecology to data pertaining to factors external to the individual. Furthermore, as implied in the statement of the ecological problem, adaptation is essentially a collective function. The smallest unit part of the community that may be logically treated is therefore an association of individuals. Another effect of the concern with a population, and one which is in keeping with what has already been said, is that it forces the ecologist into a quantitative and descriptive procedure. Ecology, in other words, tends to be a morphological study of community organization. Time does not permit further elaboration of these points. I trust that my remarks will be taken as a very sketchy characterization of the ecological point of view.[4]

The analysis, description, and explanation of community structure I take, then, to be the special task of the human ecologist. Structure, as used here, includes all that is comprised in the division of labor together with those relationships that are directly ancillary to and active in the support of the division of labor. Such a definition is obviously more comprehensive than is the social anthropologist's stratification conception. Yet it excludes interrelations that are transitory, atypical, or not pertinent to the preservation of the functional unity of the community. Unfortunately, it is not possible at this time to be more specific as to the exact connotation of community structure; that must await the accumulation of research findings.

A conception of community structure in which the division of labor occupies a large place is apt to provoke criticisms on the score of its being economic, or perhaps too restricted to "rational valuations." Some might even contend that such a conception does not pay adequate respect to the influence of culture. My response to objections of that character is that they beg the question. Our urge to cultivate a unique discipline is so strong that we are often inclined to insist upon the reality of arbitrary definitions. Actually what is economic is by the same token social. So called economic values (or data) contain a large though undetermined and doubtlessly inseparable non-economic component. As a matter of fact, much of the available quantitative data on social phenomena are in the form of economic statistics. I see no reason for rejecting such material because of the label it has acquired, nor do I find any basis for identifying a person as an economic determinist because he makes use of data of that kind. The differences between the several social sciences lie not in the facts they use but in the hypotheses they investigate.

Parenthetically, a close parallel to the alleged economic nature of ecological phenomena has found favor, not as a criticism, but in a positive statement of their character. I refer to Dr. Quinn's assertion that they are sub-social.[5] That

[3] See R. D. McKenzie, "Spatial Distance and Community Organization Pattern," *Social Forces,* V (June, 1927), 623-27; and *The Metropolitan Community* (New York, 1933), Ch. VI. See also Amos H. Hawley, "An Ecological Study of Urban Service Institutions," *The American Journal of Sociology,* VI (Oct., 1941), 629-39.

[4] For a more complete statement see my "Ecology and Human Ecology," *Social Forces,* 22 (May, 1944), 398-405.

[5] J. A. Quinn, "Ecological versus Social Interaction," *Sociol. Soc. Res.,* XVIII (1934), 565-70;

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idea seems to have its basis in the early contention that the structure of the community is "natural" or unplanned, from which, apparently, the reasoning moved to the nonrational and thence to the sub-social. The distinction between the "sub-social" and the "social," however, appears to be based more on normative than on empirical criteria. But the real difficulty is encountered in the assumed departmentalization of behavior. It is in that connection that the sub-social" bears similarity to the uncritical use of the term "economic." Such a distinction may be created by definition, of course, and certainly a person is entitled to make whatever definitions he chooses. Yet a difference when defined should be observable. Whether the "sub-social" and the "social" are observably distinguishable categories remains to be demonstrated. In the meantime it seems best to regard all interdependencies as social.

Much the same appraisal is applicable to the claim that the view of community structure as a division of labor implies too great an emphasis upon "rational values." The differentiation of "rational" from "volitional values," as suggested by Dr. Firey,[6] seems to be largely verbal, and it is extremely confusing. Incidentally, what is termed "sub-social," and, by implication, nonrational, by one author is regarded as "rational" by another.[7] Whether or not such concepts are intelligible, they belong in the context of a motivation problem and not in that of a morphological problem.

As to whether community structure is cultural or non-cultural, or is a product of influences of one order or the other, I am unprepared to say. It seems fruitless to even attempt a separation of cultural from non-cultural factors, at least until we can agree on a precise meaning for the term culture. At present we appear determined to extend its meaning to everything touched by man with the result that the concept has become so all-inclusive as to have lost most of its discriminative utility. It may be worth noting, however, that culture is one name for that which we are trying to explain.

All of these objections and the distinctions they have given rise to impress me as merely a play upon words. If Dr. Hollingshead's assertion that human ecology has lost popularity for a decade or more is correct, as I think it is, that probably is partly a result of the verbal confusion which has gathered around the point of view. I prefer to strip away all of the debris and to start afresh with a few clearly stated hypotheses and a minimum of presupposition about the nature of the data. I know of no ecological concept which does not stand in need of qualification. The real and significant heritage that we have, it seems to me, is a problem and a working point of view. The loss of popularity promises to be a healthy condition, for it means that the band-wagon has passed on and serious students may work in relative calm on the important problems of community structure.

and "The Nature of Human Ecology—Reexamination and Redefinition," *Social Forces,* XVIII (Dec., 1939), 161-168.

[6] *Land Use in Central Boston* (Cambridge, 1947), 34-38.

[7] Walter Firey, *ibid.,* 13ff.

THE POSITION OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY*

TALCOTT PARSONS
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OBJECTIVE AND APPROACH OF THE PAPER

FOR THE present purpose it seems best not to attempt a critical survey of relatively recent contributions to sociological theory. This has been done sufficiently recently in several places; for instance, the Symposium *Twentieth Century Sociology,* edited by Gurvitch and Moore, Merton's paper in the 50th anniversary issue of the *American Journal of Sociology,* the excellent paper by Edward Shils on American Sociology in the British publication "Pilot Papers,"[1] and more sketchily by Barber and myself in the January 1948 issue of the *American Journal of Sociology.*[2] This decision is further justified by the fact that there have been relatively few publications

* Paper read before the annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, New York City, December 28-30, 1947.

[1] September, 1947.

[2] January, 1948.

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